

P 261449Z FEB 91
FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9619
INFO RUEHAB/AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE//POLAD//

S E C R E T NDJAMENA 00848

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PREL PGOV CD LY FR
SUBJECT: QADHAFI THREATENS DEBY

REF: (A) NDJAMENA 795, (B) NDJAMENA 800

¶1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.

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¶2. SUMMARY: QADHAFI WARNED DEBY DURING LATTER'S RECENT VISIT TO LIBYA THAT THERE COULD BE NO STABILITY IN CHAD IF BILATERAL RELATIONS DID NOT REMAIN POSITIVE.
BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH FRANCE ARE GOOD AND DEBY IS INCREASINGLY AWARE OF THE NEED TO BE FLEXIBLE ON DOMESTIC POLITICAL ISSUES, ACCORDING TO DEPARTING FRENCH AMBASSADOR. END SUMMARY.

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¶3. ALONG WITH MANY OTHER WELL-WISHERS, I WAS AT N'DJAMENA AIRPORT AT NOON TODAY, FEBRUARY 26, TO SAY FAREWELL TO DEPARTING FRENCH AMBASSADOR GENDREAU. HE PULLED ME ASIDE TO NOTE POINTS MADE BY PRESIDENT DEBY IN THEIR FINAL MEETING EARLIER THE SAME MORNING.
ACCORDING TO GENDREAU, AT THEIR MEETING IN BENGHAZI LAST WEEK, QADHAFI ESSENTIALLY THREATENED DEBY WITH DESTABILIZATION IF CHAD DID NOT MAINTAIN FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH LIBYA. QADHAFI REFERRED TO THE INGRATITUDE OF EARLIER CHADIAN LEADERS AND NOT SO SUBTLY INDICATED TO DEBY THAT HE COULD MAKE TROUBLE IF DEBY FOLLOWED SUIT. GENDREAU SAID THAT DEBY RESENTED THIS LANGUAGE AND REMAINS ON GUARD TOWARDS QADHAFI AND LIBYA.

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¶4. GENDREAU ALSO COMMENTED ON CHAD-FRANCE RELATIONS WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS GOOD, AND HE ADDED THAT LOCAL FRENCH BUSINESSMEN, ESPECIALLY THE SMALLER MERCHANTS, SAY THEY NOTE AN IMPROVED ATTITUDE OF CHADIAN AUTHORITIES TOWARD THEM. IN RESPONSE TO MY COMMENT REGARDING DEBY'S NEED TO DEAL WITH EMERGING DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS, GENDREAU SAID THAT THE CHADIAN PRESIDENT IS INCREASINGLY AWARE OF THE NEED FOR FLEXIBILITY IN THIS AREA.

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¶5. COMMENT: THIS WAS A HURRIED CONVERSATION THAT DID NOT ALLOW TIME TO EXPLORE THE POINTS MADE BY GENDREAU. AS INDICATED REF (A), THE CHADIANS WHO ACCOMPANIED DEBY TO BENGHAZI WITH WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN HAVE INDICATED THAT DEBY'S SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS WERE ONLY PARTLY SUCCESSFUL. IT IS NOT CLEAR, HOWEVER, WHETHER GENDREAU WAS REFERRING TO QADHAFI'S MENACING SPEECH OR REMARKS MADE PRIVATELY TO DEBY. IN ANY CASE, GENDREAU'S REPORT SUGGESTS THAT DEBY AND QADHAFI DID NOT ESTABLISH A GOOD PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP. WE ARE SOMEWHAT SURPRISED BY GENDREAU'S COMMENTS ON THE MOOD OF FRENCH BUSINESSMEN HERE SINCE BUSINESS ACTIVITY IS AT A STANDSTILL. HOWEVER, THE FRENCH GENERALLY PROBABLY FEEL LESS HOSTILITY FROM THE GOC THAN WHEN HABRE WAS IN POWER. ON DOMESTIC ISSUES, IT MAY BE THAT BY NOW DEBY IS

RESPONDING TO INTENSIFYING PRESSURE FROM SOUTHERNERS AND OTHERS TO KEEP HIS PROMISES REGARDING DEMOCRATIZATION, BUT SO FAR THERE IS LITTLE TANGIBLE PROOF OF SUCH AN ATTITUDE REPORTED BACK TO US BY OTHER SOURCES, OTHER THAN DEBY'S OWN INNER CIRCLE. (REF B).

¶6. MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.

BOGOSIAN